

World Baseball Classic: Pool D

Thursday, 5 March, 2026

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

Team Netherlands

Ozzie Albies

Xander Bogaerts

Didi Gregorius

Workout Day Press Conference

Q. Ozzie, I saw you during Spring Training and you were playing with Acuña. About the game tomorrow, you are great friends. Did you make a bet, a dinner, a watch, something like that?

OZZIE ALBIES: No, no bets. No bettings at all.

Q. How are you facing this game tomorrow, your first game against Venezuela? You have great names, but you have very interesting names to face that team tomorrow.

OZZIE ALBIES: We have a very good team. We are going to play tomorrow. We are going to give everything we've got to get the win.

Q. You are the three most experienced guys in your team? Are you talking with the rest of the players since you are in a very strong group with Venezuela and Dominican Republic?

OZZIE ALBIES: We have a very well-balanced team, meaning that we have older players and young players that are starting in the major leagues. Together we are going to fight. That's what we are going to do tomorrow.

Q. I was just wondering, being veterans on this team so far, what have you seen as far as quality or qualities so far that give you confidence going into this tournament?

XANDER BOGAERTS: I think for me it's just that we've known each other for a long time. In Ozzie's case, I've never played with him, but with Didi I've played with him since we were 14, 15. For the most part, we kind of know everyone, we've either played against or played together with them. So we speak the same language, pretty much. I think that's something we have in our advantage



compared to a lot of bigger countries.

Venezuela is so big. Guys probably played with each other only in the Big Leagues. But these guys and us, we probably played with each other growing up.

Q. Do you guys have a favorite Dutch dish by chance?

XANDER BOGAERTS: Kibbeling, herring. That's it.

Q. It's kind of a crucial game tomorrow early in the tournament.

XANDER BOGAERTS: The game tomorrow is crucial?

A. Yeah. Maybe for the first or second place in the league, in the pool?

XANDER BOGAERTS: We know who we're going up against. Nicaragua is also good. Israel is also good. They also have big league players, so they're all good. But probably the two favorites is Dominican and Venezuela. But in the past we've beat big teams like that before. It's not something that's new to us.

It's not easy, but we're definitely up for the challenge. I feel like this is probably one of the best teams we have WBC-wise. Pitching-wise we have a lot of young talent. Normally we have a lot of veteran guys, but now we have a lot of guys just working hard. If you miss 95 down the middle, you might still get away, compared to 85 or something.

Q. My question is for Xander. What's the feeling like to face two of your teammates, not tomorrow but during the tournament? Machado, that is the captain of the Dominican Republic and Fernando Tatis Jr. Two, are you going to celebrate like Cristiano Ronaldo.

XANDER BOGAERTS: We haven't done anything like that yet. We have a crown that we are going to use to celebrate, but I don't know if we are going to continue using that. I have been thinking about facing Manny and Fernando. I don't remember a lot of facing other players in



previous WBCs. They are great players. I mean, the whole team. Their whole team is great. I hope that they are cold that day so we can take advantage.

Q. Didi, what made you want to come back and play with these guys, and how have you been staying in shape the past few years?

DIDI GREGORIUS: I've been active for the past few years. I've been playing in México. I've been having fun down there. It's like the new Triple-A down there. You get a lot of guys that didn't make the cut in the Big Leagues and now they have a chance to go over there and play. It's really good competition. That's what guys are not paying attention to. For me, it's a neutral place. Guys are going up and down.

Q. Touch on wanting to come back and play with these guys.

DIDI GREGORIUS: Like they were saying, these are guys that I grew up with since they were kids. It's a group of guys that it's like a family that all of us come together every time we have an opportunity to play. It's good for me and everybody up here to have fun and play the game. I think it's the best that we can do as a team.

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